

## [Cicero R. Johnson]

[?]

Burks : L.L.

FORM A

Circumstances of Interview.

NAME OF WORKER Albert Burks ADDRESS 239 So. 20

DATE Dec. 3, 1938 SUBJECT American Folklore

1. Name and address of informant. Cicero R. Johnson—[648?] So. 20th
2. Date and time of interview. Dec. 3, 1938—6:15 p.m.—8:45 p.m.
3. Place of interview. Residence.
4. Name and address of person, if any, who put you in touch with informant. Personal acquaintance.
5. Name and address of person, if any, accompanying you. None.
6. Description of room, house, surroundings, etc. Modern cottage. Parlor where interview took place neatly and cosily furnished. Overstuffed suits, radio in one corner book case in another. Two straight chairs and one occasional chair.

FORM B Personal History of Informant

NAME OF WORKER Albert Burks ADDRESS 239 So. 20

## Library of Congress

DATE Dec. 3, 1938 SUBJECT American Folklore

NAME AND ADDRESS OF INFORMANT. Cicero R. Johnson 648 S. 20th

1. Ancestry. Negro
2. Place and date of birth. Louisville Kentucky Sept. 18, 1869
3. Family. 3
4. Place lived in. Five years in Shrevesport La. From 1879-1884 Texas until 1906 railroad service. Denver 1906-1914. Lincoln 1915-1938.
5. Education with dates. Fourth grade common school.
6. Occupations and accomplishments, with dates. Dining car cook and waiter 1895-1906. Waiter in 1906-1914, Denver Colo. 1915-to 1925 waiter and cook Lincoln Nebr., 1915 to present custodian at Eastman Kodak Co.
7. Special skills and interests. Lodge worker.
8. Community and religious activities. A.M.B. Quinn Chapel
9. Description of informant. Medium height, slender dark complexioned.
10. Other points gained in interview

FORM C Text of Interview (Unedited)

NAME OF WORKER Albert Burks ADDRESS 239 So. 20

DATE Dec. 30 1938 SUBJECT American Folklore

NAME AND ADDRESS OF INFORMANT Cicero R. Johnson

"My mother and father moved from my birth place Louisville Kentucky, to Shreveport when I was just a kid. Both of them had been in slavery and after the war was over they got in touch with some of our kin-folks.

My early boy-hood was spent on a little farm on the outskirts of Shreveport. My father died when I was quite young so mama had to take in washing. I'll never forget the old iron pot that she used to boil the clothes in. It was as large as a ordinary tub, and the fire that she [?] it on to boil the clothes, was made in the back yard in a pit dug in the ground about three feet by two feet. It was lined inside with stones. Water had to be carried from a stream about a block away and it sure was a tough job toten water on wash days.

Most of our cooking was out of doors too, if the weather permitted. I remember the old three legged iron kettle that hung on the 'Dog Iron,' in the fire place as we cooked a mess of collared greens, mustard etc. A Dog Iron is similar to a grate that they have to set in a fire place now, only in those days it was not fancy made but crude. A black-smith used to fashion them. We could barbecue in these pits too. Only we would use a different kind of wood to make the fire usually hickory, or Post Oak; that kind of wood had less smoke and the sap in the wood is sweet, that gave a better flavor to the meat.

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On Sunday's we would always have some friends and the parson over for dinner. Rev. Allen was the preacher I remember and he was well liked by all of the folks around, both colored and white. One of his sermons that was a favorite of mine was: "Be thou faithful unto death and thou shall have a crown of life."